

Which one is active duty and which one is Guard? Point is ... it doesn't matter when it comes to Future Total Force. Airman 1st Class Shawn Nelson is active duty with the 20th Fighter Wing at Shaw Air Force Base, S.C., and Staff Sgt. Damian Battinelli is with the 158th Fighter Wing of the Vermont Air National Guard. They both install an ejection seat in an F-16C Fighting Falcon as part of their duties in egress systems. Both are stationed at the Burlington International Airport, Vt., which is home to one of the Air Force's FTF initiatives.

# Blended, not stirred

**(a+g+r)c=FTF**  
**a=active**  
**g=guard**  
**r=reserve**  
**c=capabilities**

John F. Kennedy once said, "Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future." Today's Future Total Force concept is tomorrow's reality and indicates the Air Force's direction for the next two decades.

It's the buzz-word of today's Air Force and the next step in capitalizing on the inherent strengths of active duty, guard and reserve capabilities. The Air Force's plan is to realign missions and organizations by replacing older aircraft with newer aircraft, such as the F/A-22 Raptor, and pairing active duty units with reserve component units to maximize the benefits of what each brings to the fight.

Six test initiatives involving units in Arizona, Virginia, Vermont, Utah, Texas, New York and Nevada are already underway and more are in the works. But the following pages give active duty, Guard and Reserve Airmen a glimpse into how the force triad has worked together so far and how it will come together as a stronger, more effective force in the future.

## An example of total force in action

by Tech. Sgt. Beverly Isik and Airman 1st Class Paul Ross  
 116th Air Control Wing  
 Robins Air Force Base, Ga.

opening photo by Master Sgt. Robert Trubia

In October 2002, America's first total force wing took flight as the 116th Air Control Wing and made history by combining active-duty Airmen and Soldiers from the 93rd Air Control Wing, with Georgia Air National Guardsmen from the 116th Bomb Wing. The two formed one cohesive unit flying the E-8C — the world's only Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System.

With the realignment of the B-1, the bomb wing's mission changed in June 2001, creating an opportunity to refocus about 1,000 guardsmen. But in August of that same year, the secretary of the Air Force stepped in and proposed merging forces and taking on the mission of the 93rd Air Control Wing.

The wing is a harbinger of things to come.

The merger combined the talents of Air Force, Army, Air National Guard and civilians to train and deploy combat mission ready aircrews to conduct ground surveillance, target detection and battle tracking necessary for the plans and operations of joint force commanders around the world.

Three months after the merger, the wing deployed nine of its then 11 aircraft and 750 troops to support Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

"Blending" or integrating presented challenges for almost everyone involved. From the Air National Guard commander to the brand new active-duty Airman, the two cultures fused under one commander.

For first-termers like Airman 1st Class Chad Locke, the blended wing is part of everyday life — not something he had to get used to. Since his arrival nearly a year ago, the 116th ACW command post emergency actions controller said being a part of the 116th is a plus on many levels. For example, he said learning "difficult things now" gives him more to build on in the future when he moves to another unit.

"It's good just to have the opportunity to learn the Guard side while I'm still new," he said. "I'm an active-duty Airman on an Air Force Materiel Command base with an Air National Guard commander who reports to Air Combat Command."

When Airman Locke joined the Air Force, he planned to make a career out of it. Now, after spending time in the first total force wing, he is seriously considering transitioning to the Guard which would still keep this Airman part of the team.

"You have more control over where you're stationed and can settle down in a place closer to your hometown," the Airman said.



## Reserve Future Total Force initiatives

The Future Total Force concept wouldn't be complete without including the Air Force Reserves.

\* The 419th Fighter Wing, a Reserve unit, and the 388th Fighter Wing, an active-duty unit will partner at Hill Air Force Base, Utah. Both fly the F-16 Fighting

Falcon. Planners will use the associate unit structure where both wings have their own commander and separate chains of command. Seasoned Reservists will help train the less-experienced active-duty members.

\* Reservists will soon be integrating into all mission areas of the Air Warfare Center at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., including Predator missions. The center took its first Future Total Force step Dec. 17 when re-

servist Lt. Col. John Breeden assumed command of the center's 11th Reconnaissance Squadron, a Predator training unit based at Creech Air Force Base, Nev.

\* Another test initiative will incorporate Reserve Airmen into Predator operations in Texas and Arizona Air National Guard units. The low turnover rate of Guard and Reserve Airmen is expected to significantly reduce the Air Force's training costs associated with that mission.



On the other end of the spectrum, Chief Master Sgt. Linda Bynum will retire from the 116th after spending 24 years on active duty.

“As a chief, I am a leader,” she said. “I don’t differentiate between leading active-duty and Guard Airmen. Leadership is all about taking care of people — it doesn’t matter what category of people. It’s both exciting and rewarding to lead all Airmen.”

However, being the first isn’t easy.

The two wings joined with essentially no direction other than “... make it happen and don’t fail,” said Air National Guard Brig. Gen. Tom Lynn, who led the wing’s transformation.

Instantaneously merging two different organizations like the two former wings, the general explained, brought forth difficult “people issues.”

“We ran the spectrum of reactions to change, which ultimately resulted in some fairly intense emotional issues,” he said. “There was a great lack of knowledge by active duty and Guard of each other’s systems — pay, promotion and recognition. Education and day-to-day practical application is the only way to overcome this challenge.”

There was no template to follow, the general said. “We didn’t have the benefit of lessons learned. Therefore, many of the issues we faced were new and unexpected.”

**For more information on Future Total Force initiatives, go to [www.af.mil](http://www.af.mil) and click on the FTF icon.**

Ask almost anyone in the wing and they’ll say the blending has been a success.

“We integrated successfully and went to war successfully at the same time,” General Lynn said. “The real success story of the 116th is the men and women in this organization who wanted to make this work. The people who helped forge this total force wing will always be a part of Air Force history.”

The future of the 116th and the JSTARS mission is bright, according to the commander.

“An organization forged with the sweat, hard work and commitment of the people is one with a solid foundation,” he said. “The 116th has weathered naysayers and those who may not believe in the Total Force policy. We may end up being the only true ‘blended wing’ in the Air Force — but it works for the 116th.”✍

(Senior Airman Thomas Kielbasa contributed to this article)



## Blended vs. Associate

When it comes to shuffling Guard, Reserve and active duty like cards in a deck, some will call the new concept a blended or integrated wing while others an associate wing. A blended wing has a weapons system and one chain of command. An associate, which includes a Guard or Reserve component, has separate chains of command, while sharing the same weapon system. Sometimes, the association will be an active-duty location. Sometimes it will be a Guard or Reserve base.

Reserve wings have been successfully paired with active duty for four decades. The 116th Air Control Wing at Robins Air Force Base, Ga., was the first to combine active-duty Air Force and Army with an Air Guard unit.

by Master Sgt. Lance Cheung



# Guard’s mission expands into space

**T**he National Guard, the oldest component of the U.S. Armed Forces and one of the nation’s longest-enduring institutions, will celebrate its 369th birthday Dec. 13, 2005. The National Guard traces its history back to the earliest English colonies in North America. Responsible for their own defense, the colonists drew on English military tradition and organized their able-bodied citizens into militias. Gen. George Washington commanded early National Guard units during America’s struggle for independence 227 years ago.

Today’s Guard and Reserve face a similar mission, except their responsibility now reaches beyond state borders and into space.

“If you’re not in space, you’re not in the race,” said Gen. Lance Lord, Air Force Space Command commander, during a 2004 Air National Guard senior leader conference. “As our military use of space increases, the Guard will play an increasingly important role in maintaining space superiority — the same way [they] have grown with the air mission.”

Space-warning missions, once thought to be a thing of the future, are now a key part of the Air National Guard. This space warning system ensures mobile command and control in the event of a nuclear war or other crisis, and keeps the national command authority

informed of missile activity worldwide.

The Guard has always dabbled in the mission of space. In 1960, Buckley Air National Guard Base, Colo., was the first standalone Air National Guard base in the nation. At that time, one of its tenant units was the Air Force ballistic missile division field office.

The Guard currently has several operational space units that handle many facets of the space operations arena.

In June 1996, the 137th Missile Warning Squadron, in northern Colorado, became the first Guard unit to become a part of the U.S. Space Command. The 137th is the only Air Force unit that can provide mobile, survivable and endurable missile warning for North American defense.

The 137th SWS was followed by the 148th Space Operations near Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., in June 2001. The 148th controls the MILSTAR constellation daily in partnership with another active-duty unit.

Also in 2001, the Florida Air National Guard established the 114th Range Operations Flight to support the active duty 2nd Range Operations Squadron at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla. This flight will soon transition into the 114th Range Operations Squadron, which will operate a new one-of-a-kind mobile range safety system designed to monitor space-vehicle launches from Cape Canaveral. The system enables citizen

Airmen to track — and if necessary assist in destroying errant rockets or launch vehicles after liftoff.

In 2002, the 119th Command and Control Squadron began providing a very capable augmentation force for U.S. Strategic Command’s global operations center in its newly completed operations center near Knoxville, Tenn. Shortly after, the 153rd Command and Control Squadron was stood up to North Command’s mobile consolidated command center located at F.E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyo.

Currently there are several total force initiatives in the works that, in the near future, will increase the Guard’s space mission area in the new frontier.

- 213th Space Warning Squadron, Clear Air Force Base, Alaska, will provide ground-based missile warning and space surveillance. The transition of the mission at Clear Air Force Station from active duty to Air National Guard is nearly complete.
- 111th Space Operations Squadron, Phoenix, Ariz., will develop and execute exercises for space command.
- 20th Air Force Security Forces Support, Minot Air Force Base, N.D., will augment nuclear forces security for the 91st Security Forces Group. ✍

by Master Sgt. Orville F. Desjarlais Jr.